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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/13/2017
TAGS: [EFIN](#) [KNNP](#) [IR](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [UK](#)
SUBJECT: (S/NF) BANK SEPAH INTERNATIONAL: ASSETS PROMPTLY
FROZEN, CONSIDERABLE MOVEMENT OF DEPOSITS BEFORE UNSCR 1747
ENACTED

REF: STATE 60238

Classified By: John McNamara, Counselor for Labor and Social Affairs, f
or 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (S/NF) The Bank of England, acting as an agent of Her Majesty's Treasury, froze the assets of Bank Sepah International "within minutes" of the approval of UNSCR 1747, according to Patrick Guthrie, Head of the Financial Sanction Unit at HM Treasury. Simultaneously with the freeze of Bank Sepah's assets, the Bank of England notified the financial services sector in the United Kingdom. In response to questions contained reftel, Guthrie also noted that the Financial Services Authority, the UK financial services regulator, had temporarily frozen Bank Sepah International's assets three days prior to the UNSCR in order to prevent the flight of Bank Sepah assets. Guthrie said that there are not yet any reliable estimates of how many assets were frozen.

¶2. (S/NF) Guthrie said that there was "quite a significant" level of activity from depositors in Bank Sepah International in the weeks leading up to the UNSCR. Guthrie said that much of the activity involved the withdrawal of assets by the Government of Iran and other Iranian banks. He said that the Financial Services Authority likely had records of these transactions, but expressed doubt that it would share the details of these transactions directly with the Embassy. He did not rule out, however, that such information might be obtained through intelligence channels.

¶3. (S/NF) Guthrie said that HM Treasury has been issuing licenses for Bank Sepah transactions based upon the UNSCR's exemption for "prior licenses." He noted, however, that these transactions are being carefully monitored to ensure that no payments are being made to other designated entities.

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